

REMARKS**I. Status of the Claims:**

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-15 are currently pending. Claims 1-4, 6-9 and 11-14 have been amended, and claims 16-20 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter. Entry and consideration of this Amendment are respectfully requested.

II. Objection to the Abstract:

The Abstract has been objected to for containing two paragraphs. Applicants have amended the Abstract so that it contains a single paragraph. In accordance with MPEP 608.01(b), a substitute Abstract is submitted herewith on a separate sheet. Applicants request that this objection be withdrawn.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 3, 8, 11, 13, 16, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph for containing the phrase “and/or”. In particular, the Examiner asserts that this phrase does not clearly “set forth the metes and bounds” of the claims. Applicants respectfully traverse. This phrase conveys a clearly understood logical relationship. As such, it is requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-12, 14-16, 18, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U. S. Patent Number 5,970,475 to Barnes et al. (“Barnes”). Claims 16, 18, and 20 have been canceled, thereby rendering their rejection moot. However, with respect to the remaining claims, Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn for at least the following reasons.

Independent claims 1, 6 and 11 each recite a price database that stores price information about purchases at a plurality of bases. Figures 13 and 51 of the present application provide examples of this feature. Even though parts, products or materials are the same respectively, those are purchased at different prices due to difference of places.

In contrast, Barnes discloses a system involving multiple suppliers and only one buyer. Barnes fails to disclose a system involving multiple buyers. Moreover, there is no need in Barnes for a price database storing price information regarding purchases at a plurality of bases since all purchases are by a single buyer.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 1, 6, and 11 be withdrawn. Claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 14, and 15 each depend from a corresponding one of independent claims 1, 6, and 11. Thus Applicants request that the rejection of these claims also be withdrawn.

V. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103:

Claims 3, 8, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barnes, in view of “Business Wire”. Claims 3, 8, and 13 depend from independent claims 1, 6, and 11, respectively. Business Wire fails to overcome the aforementioned deficiencies of Barnes.

In particular, Business Wire discloses that a multi-vendor catalog is provided. However, Business Wire fails to disclose a price database storing price information about purchases at a plurality of bases. Accordingly, claims 3, 8, and 13 are neither taught nor suggested by Barnes in view of Business Wire. Therefore, Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

The Examiner also rejected claims 17 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). However, this rejection is moot based on the cancellation of these claims.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed accommodated or rendered moot. Thus, Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance, and as such, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, and allowance of this application.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 13-4503, Order No. 1232-4684.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. 13-4503, Order No. 1232-4684.

Respectfully submitted,
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